

We have 112 days before we get rid of the biggest national disaster we have ever had, the President and his environmental policies.

PRESERVING MARRIAGE BETWEEN A MAN AND A WOMAN

(Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BARRETT of South Carolina. Mr. Speaker, this week the Senate is dealing with a very important issue, one that goes to the heart of our families and society. I am speaking of marriage.

In my home State of South Carolina, we are one of 42 States that have laws on the books defining marriage as the union between a man and a woman. These laws were passed by State legislatures, those elected to represent the views of their constituents.

My constituents contact me on a daily basis about this one issue more than any other issue we deal with. They ask me to do everything I can to ensure marriage between a man and a woman is preserved. Yet some in this country, elected by no one, believe they have the right to supersede the wishes of my constituents and the constituents of other Members here today.

I respectfully disagree. I truly believe the only way to ensure court action does not override State law is for the House and Senate to take action.

Mr. Speaker, I urge the House to follow the Senate's lead on this issue and bring up this issue for a vote so we can have an open debate in the People's House.

HOUSE REPUBLICANS REFUSE TO PLAY BY THE RULES

(Mr. COOPER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. COOPER. Mr. Speaker, nothing is more important in a democracy than free and fair elections. Unfortunately, even in this, the People's House, there have been a series of abuses of the voting process by the Republican majority. How can we effectively champion democracy around the world if even here the Republican majority will not allow it to be practiced on the House floor?

Just last week, because the Republican majority did not like the outcome of our usual 15-minute vote, they held the vote open for 30 minutes. Why? In order to change the outcome. We went from a fair and square 219 vote victory to a 210-210 tie due to Republican arm-twisting, while the whole world was watching on CSPAN.

If this were the only instance of Republican tyranny in this House, perhaps it could be excused. But just last year we sadly witnessed the longest vote in American history, just so they could change the outcome.

Mr. Speaker, the Republicans need to play by the rules.

RELEASE KERRY-EDWARDS PRESIDENTIAL CAMPAIGN VIDEO

(Mr. MILLER of Florida asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. MILLER of Florida. Mr. Speaker, I am a conservative and I support the Federal marriage amendment. I understand that JOHN KERRY will make a cameo appearance this week in Washington to vote against it.

With that said, I rise to call attention and request a videotape release of the Democratic Presidential fundraiser that was held last Friday night, which quickly descended into a celebrity Bush-bashing event of low blows.

On Friday night, JOHN KERRY touted his Presidential campaign's positive tone, telling a crowd at another fundraiser that JOHN and he did not run one negative ad against each other and any of their opponents all through their primaries, and they have not done a single negative ad against the president, because "we think Americans want real solutions to real problems."

This is more proof that JOHN KERRY and his campaign have developed campaign amnesia. Just a few hours prior to those comments, his campaign fundraiser attendees listened to hours of celebrities use vulgar and tasteless attacks against our President, which KERRY endorsed, characterizing it as the heart and soul of America.

His campaign endorsed the hate-filled celebrity event, so he should share those comments with voters. I ask that they release the video today. There is no reason why they should not do it, and America deserves to see the real JOHN KERRY and JOHN EDWARDS.

LETTING AVERAGE AMERICANS PREVAIL

(Mr. NADLER asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. NADLER. Mr. Speaker, time after time in this body, the interests of the middle-class have come in second to the interests of the special interests. One example is the issue of drug reimportation.

Medications in other countries cost 40 percent less than they do here. Even Secretary Tommy Thompson recently acknowledged what Americans know all too well, reimporting prescription drugs from Canada and other industrialized countries is one of the fastest ways Americans can get lower cost drugs. Experts at Boston University estimate Americans would save \$60 billion by paying Canadian prices for brand-name drugs. What are we waiting for?

Republicans in Congress continue to stall, promoting the false promise of the new prescription drug discount

cards as a substitute for reimportation. When the gentlewoman from Ohio (Ms. KAPTUR) offered an amendment in the agricultural appropriation bill in committee that allowed for the safe reimportation of prescription drugs, Republicans tried to block it and failed. Today, that bill is on the floor. It would allow Americans to purchase these prescription drugs from other countries and lower drug costs in a straightforward way.

We should pass that amendment. I dare the Republicans to block it, as I know they will, because they are the servants of the pharmaceutical companies, and they are even trying to put that into the treaty with Australia.

AN ADMISSION FROM WITHIN

(Mr. SMITH of Texas asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. SMITH of Texas. Mr. Speaker, some of us have been saying it for years, there is a liberal bias in the media. Last weekend, we witnessed a brief moment of candor. Evan Thomas, the assistant managing editor of Newsweek Magazine, admitted on a radio station that, "The media, I think, wants KERRY to win. And I think they are going to portray KERRY and EDWARDS, I am talking about the establishment media, not Fox, but there is going to be this glow about this that is going to be worth maybe 15 points."

Let me repeat the words of this top Newsweek editor. "The media, I think, wants KERRY to win, and they are going to portray KERRY and EDWARDS in a certain way to help elect them." He says, "The media bias is worth 15 points in the polls." In other words, without media bias, President Bush would be cruising to a landslide election.

Mr. Speaker, the biased media is getting dangerously close to becoming a real threat to our democracy.

A "STRONG" ECONOMY?

(Mr. PRICE of North Carolina asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PRICE of North Carolina. Mr. Speaker, I rise today in some puzzlement. The President came to my part of our State last week and announced, "The economy is strong here in North Carolina." As the Raleigh News & Observer observed, "Is the President an optimist, or does he need an optometrist?"

Perhaps our economy seems strong to Mr. Bush. After all, he raked in over \$2 million at his afternoon fundraiser. But he did not seem to notice that we have record numbers of laid-off workers who have exhausted their unemployment benefits, 68,000 at last count. Our unemployment rate in the Raleigh-Durham area is creeping up again. The rolls grew by almost 2,000 last month.

We have had even heavier losses in manufacturing Statewide, where 158,000 such jobs have disappeared since the President took office.

President Bush's declaration of our so-called "strong" economy is simply out of touch. He is peddling the idea is that his tax cuts for the wealthiest 1 percent have worked miracles. But North Carolinians know a sluggish recovery when they see one.

Declaring our economy strong does not make it so, and it does not put food on the table either. The News & Observer noted that the President did not take questions from local reporters. Is it any wonder why?

SENIORS AND DISABLED DESERVE BETTER PRESCRIPTION DRUG COVERAGE

(Mrs. CAPPS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Mrs. CAPPS. Mr. Speaker, I rise today on behalf of millions of American seniors who deserve lower prescription drug prices. And when I say lower drug prices, I mean real discounts and real drug coverage, not meaningless discount cards.

Congress has before it legislation that requires the Federal Government to negotiate real discount prices on prescription medicine for seniors. The VA, the Veterans Administration, already uses a system like this and obtains prices significantly lower than current plans, sometimes as much as 50 percent lower. But this bill, which would make such a difference, has not been allowed to come to the floor.

The same forces withholding this floor vote are the forces lauding the current Medicare law, the new law that does nothing to actually lower the cost of prescription medicines, that prohibits Medicare from using the bargaining power of Americans, 40 million seniors, to negotiate lower prices.

Our current Medicare law tells seniors to buy drug discount cards which do not give discounts for all drugs at all pharmacies. Seniors and the disabled deserve better than this. Let us do what is right on their behalf.

PROTECT AMERICAN SENIORS, NOT DRUG COMPANIES

(Ms. BERKLEY asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend her remarks.)

Ms. BERKLEY. Mr. Speaker, last year the Bush administration forced through a sham prescription drug bill that does absolutely nothing to lower drug costs, prohibits the government from negotiating with drug companies and blocks the reimportation of drugs from other countries. Under this bill, 20,000 seniors in Nevada will actually pay more for their prescription drugs than they need.

A recent study reported that the prices of the top 30 brand-name drugs

used by seniors rose by four times the rate of inflation in 2003. For years, seniors throughout the United States have been struggling with the dramatically increasing costs of their medications, while seniors in Canada can purchase the exact same drugs for 40 percent less.

Seniors need help now, and we need new leaders in the White House who will fight for all Americans' interests. Protect our seniors and not the drug companies.

MAKING IN ORDER AT ANY TIME AMENDMENT PRINTED IN HOUSE REPORT 108-591 DURING FURTHER CONSIDERATION OF H.R. 4766, AGRICULTURE, RURAL DEVELOPMENT, FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION, AND RELATED AGENCIES APPROPRIATIONS BILL, 2005

Mr. HYDE. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that during further consideration of H.R. 4766, pursuant to House Resolution 710, the amendment printed in House Report 108-591 be permitted to be offered at any time.

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. OSE). Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on the motion to go to conference on H.R. 4613, and that I may include tabular material on the same.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

APPOINTMENT OF CONFEREES ON H.R. 4613, DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE APPROPRIATIONS ACT, 2005

Mr. LEWIS of California. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent to take from the Speaker's table the bill (H.R. 4613) making appropriations for the Department of Defense for the fiscal year ending September 30, 2005, and for other purposes, with a Senate amendment thereto, disagree to the Senate amendment, and agree to the conference asked by the Senate.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from California?

There was no objection.

MOTION TO INSTRUCT CONFEREES OFFERED BY MR. JACKSON OF ILLINOIS

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I offer a privileged motion.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. The Clerk will report the motion.

The Clerk read as follows:

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois moves that the managers on the part of the House at the

conference on the disagreeing votes of the two Houses on the Senate amendment to the bill, H.R. 4613, be instructed to insist on the maximum level within the scope of conference to respond to the humanitarian crisis in the Darfur region of Sudan and in Chad.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Under rule XXII, the proponent of the motion and a Member of the opposing party each will control 30 minutes.

The gentleman from Illinois (Mr. JACKSON) is recognized for 30 minutes.

GENERAL LEAVE

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I ask unanimous consent that all Members may have 5 legislative days within which to revise and extend their remarks and include extraneous material on my motion to instruct conferees on H.R. 4613.

The SPEAKER pro tempore. Is there objection to the request of the gentleman from Illinois?

There was no objection.

Mr. JACKSON of Illinois. Mr. Speaker, I yield myself such time as I may consume.

Mr. Speaker, I want to recognize the tireless work of the gentleman from Virginia (Mr. WOLF), the chairman of the Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, State, Judiciary and Related Agencies of the Committee on Appropriations, who has just returned from Sudan. Without the gentleman from Virginia's tireless efforts in this area, we simply would not be where we are today.

I want to thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Foreign Operations, Export Financing and Related Programs of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Arizona (Mr. KOLBE), and the ranking member, the gentlewoman from New York (Mrs. LOWEY), for their work on this issue.

I want to thank the chairman of the Subcommittee on Defense of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from California (Chairman LEWIS), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Pennsylvania (Mr. MURTHA), and the chairman of the Committee on Appropriations, the gentleman from Florida (Chairman YOUNG), and the ranking member, the gentleman from Wisconsin (Mr. OBEY) for all of their efforts and continued support.

Mr. Speaker, I offer this motion to instruct the defense appropriations conferees to provide the highest possible funding level in the supplemental title of their conference report to help alleviate the incredible humanitarian crisis that is unfolding over the last year in the Darfur region of Sudan and in eastern Chad.

Currently, the House version of the defense appropriations bill contains \$95 million for humanitarian relief in Sudan, \$25 million for refugees, and \$70 million for disaster assistance.

In 1994, this country, along with rest of the world, stood and watched as 800,000 men, women, and children were slaughtered in Rwanda.